

In the Claims:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements supported upon a frame, each of the partition elements having a configured leading edge, a plurality of compartments into which items are placed in a generally upright manner, each of said plurality of compartments being at least partially defined between a pair of partition elements, and a bottom; and

a folder device for receiving items and being generally vertically supported upon the bottom, said folder device having a pair of sides, each side being associated with one of the partition elements, each side having a forward edge, wherein the forward edges of the sides are at different heights relative to the leading edges of the associated partition elements, and wherein one of the forward edges is shaped substantially similar to the configured leading edge of the partition whereby the configured leading edge of the partition and one of the forward edges of the folder device are generally adjacent along a substantial portion of the configured leading edge.

2. (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the bottom is movable relative to the frame between a first orientation and a second orientation.

3. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the folder device includes addressee indicia on a surface thereof.

4. (canceled)

5. (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the folder device includes a splay structure tending to force the folder device into an open configuration when the folder is placed between the partitions of the sorting device.

6. (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the folder device includes a generally planar bottom which engages the bottom of the sorting device.

7. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements supported upon a frame, each of the partition elements having a configured leading edge, a plurality of compartments into which items are placed in a generally upright manner, each of said plurality of compartments being at least partially defined between a pair of partition elements, and a bottom for supporting the items; and

a folder device for receiving items, said folder device being generally vertically supported by the bottom between a pair of adjacent partition elements, said folder device having a pair of sides, each side being associated with one of the partition elements, and each side having a forward edge, wherein the forward edges are differently configured so that one of the forward edges extends to a greater height above the leading edges of the partition elements than the other, and wherein one of the forward edges is shaped substantially similar to the configured leading edge of the partition whereby the configured leading edge of the partition and one of the forward edges of the folder device are generally adjacent along a substantial portion of the configured leading edge.

8. (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the bottom of the sorting device has a first orientation and a second orientation, in the first orientation the bottom supports the items in a generally upright manner.

9. (original) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the folder device includes addressee indicia on a surface thereof.

10. (canceled)

11. (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the folder device includes a splay structure tending to maintain the folder device in an open configuration when the folder is placed between the partitions of the sorting device.

12. (original) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the folder device includes a generally planar bottom which engages the support structure in the first orientation.

13. (withdrawn) A method of using a sorting device, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements;  
sorting a plurality of mail items into mail item subgroupings, each subgrouping including similar destination indicia;  
providing a plurality of invertable folder devices each having a pair of sides;

placing with each subgrouping a folder device, whereby each subgrouping has an associated folder device, and whereby each folder device is maintained between a pair of partition elements of the mail sorting device;

accessing a particular subgrouping of mail items and an associated folder device; and inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items between the sides of the inverted folder device to define a delivery point package.

14. (withdrawn) A method of claim 13, wherein at least one of the plurality of invertable folder devices has addressee indicia disposed upon a surface thereof.

15. (withdrawn) A method of claim 14, wherein the step of placing a folder device between each subgrouping includes the step of referencing the addressee indicia of the folder device.

16. (withdrawn) A method of claim 13, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via manual manipulation of the folder device.

17. (withdrawn) A method of claim 13, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via an automated process.

18. (withdrawn) A method using a mail sorting device comprising the steps of:  
providing a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements;  
sorting a plurality of postage paid mail items into mail item subgroupings, each subgrouping including similar destination indicia, and each subgrouping being associated with at least one of the plurality of partition elements, said postage paid mail items including a plurality of flat invertable folder devices each having a unique destination indicia;

accessing a subgrouping of mail items and an associated folder device having similar destination indicia; and

inverting the associated folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items between sides of the inverted folder device to define a delivery point package.

19. (withdrawn) A method of claim 18, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via manual manipulation of the folder device.

20. (withdrawn) A method of claim 18, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via an automated process.

21. (withdrawn) A method of using a mail sorting device comprising the steps of: sorting a plurality of mail items of a first category according to a unique destination indicia;

associating a folder device with each unique destination indicia; inverting each folder device to capture mail items associated with a unique destination indicia between sides of the inverted folder device;

placing the inverted folder devices into a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements;

inserting a plurality of mail items of a second category into the inverted folder devices in the mail sorting device according to unique destination indicia; and

removing the inverted folder devices having mail items of the first and second category to define a delivery point package.

22. (withdrawn) A method of claim 21, wherein at least one of the plurality of invertable folder device has addressee indicia disposed upon a surface thereof.

23. (withdrawn) A method of claim 21, wherein the step of sorting a plurality of mail items of a first category is via an automated sorting process, and wherein the process of inserting a plurality of mail items of a second category is a manual process.

24. (withdrawn) A method of claim 21, wherein the step of inverting each folder device to capture associated mail items is achieved via manual manipulation of the folder device.

25. (withdrawn) A method of claim 21, wherein the mail items of a first category include USPS designated flats, and wherein the mail items of a second category include USPS designated non-flats.

26. (withdrawn) A method of using a mail sorting device comprising the steps of:  
providing a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements;  
sorting a plurality of mail items of a first category according to a unique destination indicia, said mail items including a plurality of invertable folder devices, each folder device having a pair of sides, and each folder device being associated with at least one of the plurality of partition elements;  
inverting the folder devices to capture mail items having a unique destination indicia between the pair of sides;  
placing the inverted folder devices into the mail sorting device;  
inserting a plurality of mail items of a second category into the inverted folder devices in the sorting device according to unique destination indicia; and  
removing the inverted folder devices having mail items of the first and second category to define a delivery point package.

27. (withdrawn) A method of claim 13, wherein the step of placing the folder devices with the subgroupings is achieved by placing the folder device as a divider between a pair of adjacent subgroupings.

28. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements, each of the partition elements having a configured leading edge, and a plurality of compartments being at least partially defined between a pair of partition elements; and

a folder device placed within a compartment for receiving items, said folder device having a pair of sides, each side being associated with one of the partition elements, wherein one of the sides has a reveal structure so that the other side extends to a greater extent above the leading edge of its associated partition element and wherein one of the forward edges is shaped substantially similar to the configured leading edge of the partition whereby the configured leading edge of the partition and one of the forward edges of the folder device are generally adjacent along a substantial portion of the configured leading edge.

29. (currently amended) An apparatus of claim 28, wherein the configured leading edge is downwardly tapered and generally linear across substantially the entire depth of the partition and the side reveal structure defines a downwardly tapering side shape similar to the configured leading edge and generally linear across substantially the entire depth of the folder device so that configured leading edge of the partition and one of the edges of the folder device are aligned and adjacent across substantially the entire depth of the folder.